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KEMEROVO, A POSSIBLE SITE OF A FACILITY FOR PRODUCTION OF STORABLE MISSILE FUEL

A nitrogen plant at Kemerovo, located in West Siberia about 200 kilometers east of Novosibirsk, may be either producing compounds having application as storable missile fuels or constructing a production unit for such compounds. According to current intelligence estimates, storable fuels are being used in several Soviet missiles, including a second-generation ICBM. 1/ As yet, however, no direct association has been noted between the nitrogen plant and the Soviet missile program.

On at least three occasions, employees of the Kemerovo Nitrogen Fertilizer Plant imeni 18th Congress of the VKP(b) -- a known producer of ammonia, ammonium nitrate, nitric acid, formaldehyde, and methanol 2/ -- have published reports on the subject of amines, compounds which have direct application as storable missile fuels or which may be used to produce other storable fuels, such as derivatives of hydrazine. Two of the reports describe an analysis of mixtures containing ammonia and methylamine, and the third a method of identifying primary aliphatic amines. 3/ The ammonia or methanol synthesized at the fertilizer plant together with chlorine, caustic soda, or other raw materials produced in the Kemerovo area would permit production of a wide range of amines and related compounds.

Another indication that the Kemerovo Nitrogen Fertilizer Plant may be concerned with production of storable fuels is the fact that representatives of the State Institute of Applied Chemistry (GIPKh) were working at the plant in 1961, apparently to aid in developing three processes, only one of which (the catalytic hydrogenation of nitrobenzene) was cited in an unclassified source. 4/ The catalytic hydrogenation of nitrobenzene yields aniline, which is itself a possible storable missile fuel. Although GIPKh has planned and designed facilities producing nonstrategic chemical products, its functions also include the development

and testing of propellants. During the late 1940's the institute investigated methods of producing amines for use as missile fuels, and this work led to construction of a plant at Dzerzhinsk for production of aliphatic amines. 5/ More recently, GIPKh was synthesizing hydrazine derivatives and in fact had supplied hydrazine required for experiments. 6/ This suggests that the institute may be operating a pilot plant for production of hydrazine and, therefore, could contribute to the development of a unit capable of large-scale production.

The aforementioned articles on amines by employees of the Kemerovo plant, the association of this facility with GIPKh, and the availability in Kemerovo of raw materials used in production of storable fuels suggest that a facility producing such compounds may be under construction or in operation at the nitrogen fertilizer plant. In the absence of any known associations with the Soviet missile program, however, additional evidence will be required for confirmation of the suspected activity.

Analyst:

Coord:

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